

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 00705 101733Z

45

ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 NSC-10

SPC-03 SAM-01 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

DODE-00 PRS-01 IO-14 L-03 H-03 AID-20 IGA-02 ACDA-19

OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-11 DRC-01 /141 W

----- 118187

O R 101600Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0609

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T AMMAN 0705

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT: AFTERMATH OF JORDANIAN ARMY TROUBLES

SUMMARY: AS RESULT KING HUSSEIN'S PERSONAL INTERVENTION, JORDANIAN INTERNAL SITUATION IS QUIET FOLLOWING FEB 3-5 DEMONSTRATIONS BY JORDANIAN ARMY. HOWEVER UNDERLYING PROBLEMS STILL REMAIN. THESE ARE RAGING INFLATION AND WIDESPREAD CIVILIAN AND MILITARY DISSATISFACTION WITH ECONOMIC SITUATION AND PRIVILEGED POSITION OF MILITARY OFFICER CLASS. END SUMMARY.

1. KING HUSSEIN'S PERSONAL INTERVENTION FOLLOWING HIS RETURN FROM LONDON FEB 5 HAS APPARENTLY CALMED JORDANIAN ARMY TROUBLES, FOR TIME BEING AT LEAST. KING'S STRATEGY APPARENTLY AIMS AT CALMING CRISIS AND BUYING TIME WHILE ASSESSING WHAT STEPS ARE ULTIMATELY REQUIRED TO MEET SITUATION. KING HAS SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 AMMAN 00705 101733Z

VISITED VIRTUALLY EVERY ARMY UNIT AND HEARD RANK

AND FILE COMPLAINTS. ONLY CONCRETE ACTION THUS FAR HOWEVER IS ROYAL DECREE OF PAY RAISE FOR ARMY AND PUBLIC SECURITY, WITHOUT SPECIFYING EXACT AMOUNT. MEANWHILE, GOJ HAS LIFTED TOTAL MEDIA CENSORSHIP IN ORDER TO PUBLICIZE KING'S VISITS TO ARMY, WHILE LIMITING PUBLIC CHARACTERIZATION OF ARMY INCIDENTS AS "PLEA FOR IMPROVEMENT LIVING CONDITIONS" WITHOUT MENTIONING WIDESPREAD DEMANDS FOR REMOVAL PRIME MINISTER AND CHIEF OF STAFF (WHICH HAVE SOMEWHAT DIMINISHED).

2. KING HAS THUS FAR RESISTED DEMANDS TO REMOVE PM RIFAI AND COS BIN SHAKER. INSTEAD, RUMORS CIRCULATING THAT BIN SHAKER'S TWO DEPUTIES MAY BE REMOVED AND REPLACED BY POPULAR JAA OFFICERS. ON CIVILIAN SIDE, BLAME FOR INFLATION APPARENTLY BEING SHIFTED TO MINISTER OF ECONOMY AND "GREEDY MONOPOLISTIC MERCHANTS". TO HELP MEET ECONOMIC SITUATION, GOJ HAS LOWERED PRICE OF SUGAR AND RICE AND ANNOUNCED TEMPORARY BAN ON EXPORT OF FRUIT AND OTHER FOODSTUFFS. HOWEVER, PUBLIC RUMOR IS THAT GOJ ANNOUNCED BAN ONLY AFTER ARMY TOOK UNAUTHORIZED ACTION FEB 9 TO BLOCK SOME EXPORT SHIPMENTS. MOREOVER PUBLIC CREDITS ARMY THREAT TO MOVE AGAINST MERCHANTS AS RESPONSIBLE FOR SOME PRICE REDUCTIONS.

3. REGARDING ARMY PAY RAISE, GOJ HAS ATTEMPTED A SLEIGHT OF HAND, CLAIMING THAT RAISE WAS ALREADY AUTHORIZED BY CABINET WHILE NEVERTHELESS MAKING A FANFARE OF OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION (WITHOUT HOWEVER GIVING ANY SPECIFIC DETAILS ON AMOUNT). SOLDIERS REPORTEDLY UNHAPPY WITH AMOUNT OF EARLIER MILITARY RAISE. GOJ MAY THEREFORE BE FORCED TO UP THE ANTE BUT MUST ALSO CONSIDER POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECT OF FURTHER MILITARY PAY RAISE ON CIVILIAN POPULATION.

4. WHILE RUMORS OF ESTABLISHMENT INTRIGUE STILL LINGER (PARTICULARLY ACCUSING KING'S UNCLE SHARIF NASIR), ROOT CAUSE OF RECENT INCIDENT IS VIRULENT INFLATION WHICH REACHED RECORD ANNUAL CONSUMER PRICE INCREASE OF 18.5 PERCENT DURING PAST YEAR. HOWEVER, FOOD PRICES

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 AMMAN 00705 101733Z

HAVE RISEN EVEN HIGHER--34 PERCENT IN PAST YEAR, OF WHICH GREATLY ACCELERATED RISE OF 25 PERCENT OCCURRED IN PAST TWO MONTHS. TO LARGE EXTENT INFLATION IS WORLDWIDE AND AREA WIDE PHENOMENON (WE NOTE RECENT CONGEN REPORT OF SIMILAR PROBLEM IN JERUSALEM) AND WE DO NOT EXPECT DRAMATIC TURNAROUND IN COMING MONTHS.

5. PUBLIC ECONOMIC COMPLAINTS TOOK FORM OF RECRIMINA-

TIONS BY RANK AND FILE SOLDIERS AGAINST PRIVILEGED CLASSES, PARTICULARLY ARMY OFFICERS WHO ARE WIDELY BELIEVED TO BE PROSPERING FROM ROYAL FAVORITISM AND ACCESS TO LUCRATIVE MILITARY KICKBACKS. PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF JANUARY ROYAL ACTION IN RELIEVING DEBTS FOR HIGHER RANKING OFFICERS (AT COST OF \$2.5 MILLION) WAS MOST IMPORTANT CAUSE OF PUBLIC OUTCRY WHICH PROMISES TO CONTINUE ON THIS ISSUE. KING'S PRELIMINARY RESPONSE HOWEVER IS TO STICK TO DECISION AND RE-AFFIRM PROMISE TO EVENTUALLY RELIEVE ALL MILITARY RANKS OF DEBTS. GOJ ESTIMATES TOTAL DEB RELIEF COST FOR ARMY WOULD BE AROUND 2.8 MILLION JD'S (\$8.5 MILLION). MAJOR PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM WITH KING'S APPROACH VIS A VIS RANK AND FILE IS THAT ONLY THE MOST AFFLUENT, AND IN MANY CASES, PRODIGAL OFFICERS HAVE DEBTS TO CANCEL.

6. DESPITE FEDAYEEN AND RADICAL ATTEMPTS TO EXPLOIT SITUATION THERE LITTLE PARTISAN POLITICAL CHARACTER TO RECENT EVENTS. (THIS HAS NOT PREVENTED HOSTILE (MAINLY FOREIGN) ELEMENTS FROM ATTEMPTING SPREAD LINE THAT US STIMULATED TROUBLES SO AS TO SOMEHOW WEAKEN JORDANIAN NEGOTIATING POSITION VIS A VIS WEST BANK ISSUE.) NEVERTHELESS, ULTIMATE POLITICAL CHARACTER OF PUBLIC CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT AND ARMY, HOWEVER LOYALIST IN FORM, SHOULD BE DISCOUNTED. ANOTHER DANGER IS THAT GOJ APPEARS TO BE TEMPTED TO CREATE IMPRESSION AN ORGANIZED CONSPIRACY RESPONSIBLE FOR ARMY TROUBLES AS A WAY TO DIVERT PUBLIC CRITICISM FROM GOVERNMENT. AS YET WE SEE NO EVIDENCE OF CONSPIRACY BEHIND UPRISING AND DO NOT BELIEVE JORDANIAN PUBLIC WOULD ACCEPT THAT EXPLANATION.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 AMMAN 00705 101733Z

7. MAJOR RESIDUAL SENTIMENT FOLLOWING UPRISING IS PUBLIC CRITICISM OF MILITARY OFFICERS AND BELIEF THAT GOJ HAS BEEN UNRESPONSIVE TO INTERESTS OF HUMBLE CITIZENS. TO LARGE EXTENT, ARMY PROTEST SUPPORTED BY PUBLIC AS JUSTIFIABLE CHALLENGE TO GOJ LEADERSHIP, ALTHOUGH MANY SOPHISTICATED JORDANIANS EQUALLY CONCERNED OVER PRECEDENT OF ARMY "INTERVENTION" IN GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS FOR FUTURE.

GRAHAM

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMED FORCES, MILITARY PERSONNEL, WAGES, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974AMMAN00705
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740243/aaaaboio.tel
Line Count: 164
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <02 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AFTERMATH OF JORDANIAN ARMY TROUBLES SUMMARY: AS RESULT KING HUSSEIN'S PERSONAL INTER-
TAGS: PINS, MILI, JO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005